

**OFFICE OF THE DEFENDER GENERAL
JUVENILE DEFENDER DIVISION
JOB SPECIFICATIONS – INVESTIGATOR – PG 22**

Class Definition:

Investigative work for the Office of the Juvenile Defender. Provides legal services to juveniles in the custody of the Commissioner of Social and Rehabilitative Services (SRS). Duties are performed with a high degree of independence, but require teamwork with attorneys and other staff members. Work is performed under the supervision of a Juvenile Defender and is reviewed by the Defender General or his/her designee.

Examples of Work:

Responsible for providing representation and advocacy at administrative proceedings on behalf of juveniles in state custody throughout Vermont, including at the Woodside Juvenile Detention and Rehabilitation Center, other restrictive Vermont placements, and out-of-state placements. Conducts in-depth interviews of clients, both in-person and by telephone. Interacts with all levels of SRS staff in an attempt to negotiate an administrative remedy to client complaints. Represents children at administrative hearings to determine liberty issues and ensure due process rights for juveniles in restrictive settings. May provide assistance and direction to SRS workers in determining placement and treatment needs for clients. May assist attorneys in preparation for court litigation, including interviewing clients, SRS caseworkers, and other interested parties. May conduct legal research, draft legal documents, and file administrative appeal requests. May determine the need for and secure expert assistance in consultation with the attorney. Acts as a resource and referral person on juvenile issues for defense investigators and attorneys, and the Vermont Law School Clinic. May assist in the formation of case strategies on legal, treatment, and placement issues. Assists Juvenile Defender with office management, case flow, and supervision of support staff, volunteers and interns. May serve subpoenas and testify in court. Performs related duties as required.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required:

Thorough knowledge and understanding of investigative principles and techniques. Thorough knowledge of interview techniques. Thorough knowledge of SRS practices, rules and procedures. Thorough knowledge of placement options, therapeutic foster care programs, and in-state and out-of-state residential programs. Considerable knowledge Vermont family law. Working knowledge of applicable state and federal laws. Ability to consider and identify interpersonal problems facing clients, such as learning disabilities, substance abuse issues and psychiatric needs. Knowledge of community resources and counseling services available to clients, and the ability to coordinate these and present them in an accessible format. Ability to prepare clear and concise, or detailed and complex reports as required. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Ability to gather, analyze and interpret large amounts of complex data or documentary evidence. Ability to prepare graphics or other documentation for exhibition. Ability to make public presentations. Ability to operate equipment such as cameras and tape recorders. Ability to draft legal documents. Ability to research, read, and interpret laws, regulations, and caselaw of considerable complexity. Ability to manage a heavy caseload. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships, and perform job functions with tact and discretion.

Environmental Factors:

Incumbents should be in good physical condition. May need to perform strenuous physical activity if required. May have to work long and irregular hours in the field during work assignments. Duties require travel for which private means of transportation is required. The nature of the work can be very stressful, and may create situations of potential danger and injury. Evening and weekend work may be necessary.

Minimum Qualifications:

Education: Bachelor's degree. Experience: Four years of professional investigation work, or experience as required by the Defender General. Additional work experience may be substituted for the bachelor's degree on a six months for a semester basis.